



# Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

## Lawrence, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely clean up brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years, with additional funding provided for greenspace), to test assessment models and facilitate coordinated assessment and cleanup efforts at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels; and job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, a cleanup revolving loan fund program (each funded up to \$1,000,000 over five years) to provide financial assistance for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Lawrence to receive supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot and additional funding for assessments at Brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Originally a farming town, Lawrence was transformed into one of the first planned industrial cities in the country in the mid-1800s. Mills, industrial buildings, underground water raceways, and homes, which were built in close proximity to one another, now constitute historic preservation areas. However, Lawrence has the lowest per capita income and highest unemployment rate in Massachusetts. Seven thousand jobs were lost during the 1980s, even in the midst of the Massachusetts economic boom. This decline primarily affects the large minority population in the city.

The original Pilot targeted three sites as part of the city's Lawrence Gateway Project (LGP), an overall revitalization strategy for the city's downtown industrial, commercial, and residential centers. The three sites are the Everett Mills warehouse, the Atlantic powerhouse, and the Oxford paper mill. The supplemental grant funds will be used for soil and subsurface assessments at the Oxford site in preparation for construction of a new entranceway

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



Lawrence, Massachusetts

**Date of Award:** April 2001

**Amount:** \$150,000

**Greenspace:** \$50,000

**Profile:** The Pilot will target the Oxford paper mill site for environmental assessments and four sites for greenspace reuse.

#### Contacts:

City of Lawrence, Office of Planning  
and Development  
(978) 794-5891

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 1  
(617) 918-1394

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflld>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

bridge to the Gateway. Additional funding will be used for assessments on at least four sites in the North Common neighborhood, a residential area in the Gateway connected to the Oxford site by the Spicket River, targeted for greenspace creation. The targeted sites are those which the community has laid claim to through grassroots efforts to create badly needed open and recreational space on formerly commercial and industrial land. Greenspace reuse activities in the North Common neighborhood are being aided by the city's partnership with the National Park Service to improve the physical environment in brownfields communities.

## **OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

The Lawrence Pilot will use the EPA supplemental assistance grant to fund environmental site assessments at the Oxford paper mill site. Of the three sites originally targeted by the Pilot, the Oxford site is the only one that still needs to be assessed. The historical use of the site has left the area contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and there is the possibility of contamination from polyaromatic hydrocarbons. Once the assessments are completed, the city will be able to proceed with cleanup and redevelopment plans for the site.

The Pilot has also been selected to receive funding for greenspace reuse. The Pilot targets four sites in the North Common neighborhood for environmental assessments with the intent of creating greenspace. The greenspace development is being led by grassroots efforts and includes the creation of a playground on a vacant commercial lot, a community garden on a large vacant lot, and a greenway along the Spicket River, which includes two targeted sites.

### *The Pilot plans to:*

- Conduct environmental site assessments at the Oxford paper mill site;
- Conduct Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments at the four sites targeted for greenspace reuse; and
- Partner with the Reviviendo Planning Group and Groundwork Lawrence, a forum of public and private stakeholders, in planning the greenspace activities in the North Common neighborhood.

*The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.*